

South Precinct Email Community Newsletter

April 4, 2007



Dear Community Friends,

Domestic Violence

This week we have seen local and national news reports that have brought the issue of domestic violence to the forefront.

- On Monday, April 2, 2007, Rebecca Griego was shot and killed by her ex-boyfriend, Jonathan Rowan. Griego had a restraining order against Rowan as he had repeatedly threatened her during and after their on-and-off relationship. He stalked and harassed her and her family. Though she had moved and changed her phone number, Rowan continued to call her at work. Co-workers were advised of the situation and told to watch out for him. Even with that, Rowan went to Griego's place of employment at the University of Washington, shot her as she was alone in her office, then shot himself.
- On Tuesday, April 3, 2007, Clara Riddles, of College Park, Georgia, was fatally shot by her ex-boyfriend, Arthur Mann, at the CNN Center complex in Atlanta. Witnesses saw Mann pulling Riddles by her hair. Riddles was screaming, trying to wrestle free of Mann. Witnesses said Riddles appeared to be shot at point-blank range, "...like he [Mann] had the gun right on top of her head and shot her." Mann was subsequently shot by a security officer, is currently in a hospital in stable condition, and has been charged with Riddles' murder.

Domestic violence is the ugly elephant in the room that nobody really wants to talk about. Much domestic abuse goes unreported. The victims (or as I prefer to refer to them as – the survivors) may feel shamed, trapped, or afraid. While many of us may think, "just leave." Think about the above examples. These women did everything they could. They got out, they had restraining orders, they moved on. Unfortunately, the ex-boyfriends did not. It is a fact that a person is far more likely to be assaulted, abused, or raped by someone they know, have trusted or live with than they are by a stranger. In most instances, the victims or survivors have options. There *is* assistance for those who want or need it, and there is *always* something that can be done.

Seattle Police Response to Domestic Violence

Seattle Police respond to domestic violence calls more than any other person-to-person crime. A domestic violence call is dispatched with the highest priority because of the potential for harm or death. Once at the scene of the domestic violence call, if there is evidence of physical assault, the abuser will be arrested, removed from the scene and charged with domestic violence Assault. Arrest and removal of the abuser is mandatory per Washington state law.

Further, Seattle is one of the only police departments in the country that has a dedicated Domestic Violence Investigations unit. The detectives in this unit consider their work "Murder Prevention." That should give you an idea of how serious they take the issue.

Additionally, Seattle has a unique program called the Domestic Violence Victim Support Team. The Victim Support Team is a partnership between community volunteers and police. The program is designed to address the gap in services for domestic violence victims that often occurs over the weekend, working with the survivors from the time patrol officers respond to a domestic violence call to the time advocates, detectives and prosecutors make contact with the victim(s) for follow up. Victim Support Team volunteers provide crisis intervention, safety planning, help locating emergency resources, transportation to a safe location, and referrals to over 100 community agencies. For more information about the Victim Support Team, or to get involved, please call (206) 684-7721.

There are a number of state, local and national domestic violence resources. If you know those who need assistance, good starting points are the **King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence** website (www.kcadv.org) or call the **Washington State Domestic Violence hotline**: 1-800-562-6025.

Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon, South Precinct Crime Prevention Coordinator